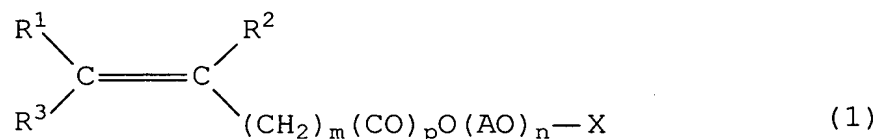


What is claimed is:

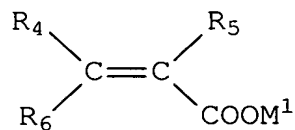
1. A method of dispersing a hydraulic composition, said method comprising adding a powdery dispersant to the hydraulic composition;

wherein said powdery dispersant comprises at least one copolymer, wherein said copolymer is made by polymerizing at least one vinyl monomer (a) represented by the formula (1):



wherein  $\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  represent a hydrogen atom or a methyl group,  $\text{R}^3$  represents a hydrogen atom or  $-\text{COO}(\text{AO})_n\text{X}$ ,  $m$  is a number of 0 to 2,  $p$  is a number of 0 or 1,  $\text{AO}$  represents a  $\text{C}_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene group or an oxystyrene group,  $n$  is the average mole number of  $\text{AO}$  groups and is a number of 2 to 300, and  $\text{X}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a  $\text{C}_{1-18}$  alkyl group;

with at least one vinyl monomer (b) represented by the formula (2):



(2)

wherein  $R^4$ ,  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  are the same as or different from one another and each represent a hydrogen atom, a methyl group or  $-(CH_2)_{m_1}COOM^2$  wherein  $-(CH_2)_{m_1}COOM^2$  is optionally combined with  $-COOM^1$  or another  $-(CH_2)_{m_1}COOM^2$  to produce an anhydride so that  $M^1$  and  $M^2$  of these groups are not present, each of  $M^1$  and  $M^2$  represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent metal, and  $m_1$  is a number of 0 to 2,

wherein the average mole number of  $C_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene groups or oxystyrene groups of said copolymer is 50 to 150;

$(a)/[(a) + (b)] \times 100$  ranges from 15 to 45 (mole%); and at least part of the copolymers is a monovalent metal salt.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the average mole number of  $C_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene groups or oxystyrene groups of said copolymer is 70 to 115.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein  $(a)/[(a) + (b)] \times 100$  ranges from 20 to 45 mole%.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the powdery dispersant comprises the copolymer made from starting monomers that are 98 to 100 % by weight of the monomers (a) and (b).

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said powdery dispersant comprises 50 to 100 % by weight of dispersant particles whose diameter is 500  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.

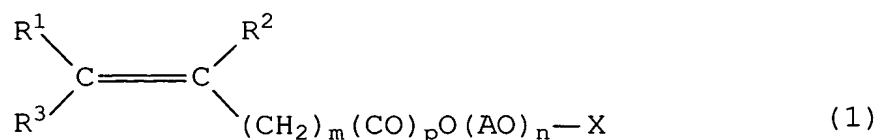
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the average mole number of the  $\text{C}_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene groups or oxystyrene groups of said copolymer is 70 to 100.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one vinyl monomer (b) is selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylic acid, a salt thereof and maleic anhydride.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said monovalent metal salt is an alkali metal salt.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said monovalent metal salt is an alkali metal salt.

10. A method of using a powdery dispersant for a hydraulic composition, said powdery dispersant comprising at least one copolymer, wherein said copolymer is made by polymerizing at least one vinyl monomer (a) represented by  
5 the formula (1):



wherein  $\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  represent a hydrogen atom or a methyl  
 10 group,  $\text{R}^3$  represents a hydrogen atom or  $-\text{COO}(\text{AO})_n\text{X}$ ,  $m$  is a  
 number of 0 to 2,  $p$  is a number of 0 or 1,  $\text{AO}$  represents a  
 $\text{C}_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene group or an oxystyrene group,  $n$  is the  
 average mole number of  $\text{AO}$  groups and is a number of 2 to  
 300, and  $\text{X}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a  $\text{C}_{1-18}$  alkyl group;

15 with at least one vinyl monomer (b) selected from the  
 group consisting of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, an  
 alkaline earth metal salt of acrylic acid, an alkaline earth  
 metal salt of methacrylic acid and maleic anhydride;

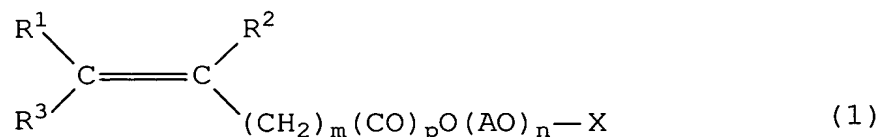
wherein the average mole number of  $\text{C}_{2-4}$  oxyalkylene  
 20 groups or oxystyrene groups of said copolymer is 45 to 150;

$(a)/[(a) + (b)] \times 100$  ranges from 15 to 45 (mole%); and

at least part of the copolymer is a alkaline earth  
 metal salt.

11. A method of dispersing mortar with a powdery  
 dispersant for a hydraulic composition, said powdery  
 dispersant comprising at least one copolymer, wherein said

5 copolymer is made by polymerizing at least one vinyl monomer  
 (a) represented by the formula (1):



10 wherein R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> represent a hydrogen atom or a methyl group, R<sup>3</sup> represents a hydrogen atom or -COO(AO)<sub>n</sub>X, m is a number of 0 to 2, p is a number of 0 or 1, AO represents a C<sub>2-4</sub> oxyalkylene group or an oxystyrene group, n is the average mole number of AO groups and is a number of 2 to  
 15 300, and X represents a hydrogen atom or a C<sub>1-18</sub> alkyl group;

with at least one vinyl monomer (b) selected from the group consisting of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, an alkaline earth metal salt of acrylic acid, an alkaline earth metal salt of methacrylic acid and maleic anhydride;

20 wherein the average mole number of C<sub>2-4</sub> oxyalkylene groups or oxystyrene groups of said copolymer is 45 to 150;

(a)/[(a) + (b)] × 100 ranges from 15 to 45 (mole%); and

at least part of the copolymer is a alkaline earth metal salt.